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Person und Sache: System der philosophischen Weltanschauung.

Erster Band: Ableitung und Grundlehre. Von L. WILLIAM STERN.

Leipzig, Verlag von Johann Ambrosius Barth, 1906. — pp. xiv, 434.

This work develops the metaphysical groundwork of what its author regards as the first systematic exposition of a new world-view. This view is called 'critical personalism,' in contrast with both 'naïve personalism' and 'impersonalism.' Naïve personalism is an unsystematic world-theory, in which both persons and material things are recognized as real, and its universe of being is a confused intermixture of both. Naïve personalism is dualistic: it separates God the person from the world his creation, separates the living from the lifeless, the identical and simple substrate of the soul from its phenomenal manifestations, etc. It depersonifies the person as a whole and personifies an element which it calls the 'soul.' Its view of causality is exoteric, *i. e.*, all causality is *transeunt* or is a transaction between two causes external to one another. Impersonalism, the mechanical world-theory, asserts that nothing exists beyond aggregates of simple elements and combinations of simple occurrences. It reduces all qualitative differences to quantitative, all individual occurrences to mechanical law, eliminates teleology, and reduces all distinctions of *value* to mere illusion. Critical personalism, on the other hand, regards the real world as a hierarchy of teleologically active individuals which, by their immanent working, conserve and develop *values*. Each individual member of the hierarchy at the same time has the intrinsic worth which belongs to it as an individual, and fulfils a function as a member of a higher and more comprehensive individual. Between the lower limiting notion of mere matter or pure thing (*Sache an sich*) and the upper limiting notion of the absolute and perfect Person, every element of reality is at once person and thing, — *person* as self-active and intrinsically worthwhile individual with immanent tendency and power to realize ends, *thing* as functional member in the complex of a higher person. For example, a molecule is a thing with reference to the compound of which it is a part, but a person with reference to the atoms which make it up; an atom is a thing with reference to all higher unities of the manifold, but a person with reference to matter-in-itself; a human individual is a self-active, intrinsically worthwhile person, but is also a member of the more comprehensive personality of a family; a family, again, is thing with reference to the personality of community, state or people, etc. A person is an existence of such character that, despite its multiplicity of parts, it forms a real, unique, and intrinsically worthwhile unity; and, despite

the multiplicity of its partial functions, it exercises a unitary and teleological activity.

The hierarchical system of personal realities is an immanently progressive whole. There is no action or effectuation which is not teleological. The only real cause is final cause. In telic causality the cause need not equal the effect. Hence the universe of persons develops unceasingly, and attains and conserves ever higher levels of self-realization.

The foundation of this system, which is to be expanded into a doctrine of values, of the world, of science, and of the symbolic forms of art and religion, is laid in the present volume in the two main divisions : I, The Deduction ; and II, The Fundamental Doctrines. In the first part we find a dogmatic and epistemological deduction respectively. The logical basis of this deduction is the formulation of the four dogmas of all *Weltanschauungen*. Necessary to an understanding of this and of all that follows is the attitude of 'psychophysical neutrality.' Dr. Stern departs from the tradition of modern philosophy in denying the fundamental position of the problem of mind and body as hitherto formulated, and in refusing to regard 'consciousness' either as the epistemological *præ* or as a necessary metaphysical attribute of persons. Throughout the work he maintains this psychophysical neutrality and insists that metaphysics must be 'metapsychophysical,' *i. e.*, starting from the phenomenological indifference-point of physical and psychical, it must pass to a viewpoint that transcends both physical and psychical in the ordinary sense. The 'four dogmas' just alluded to concern the reality respectively of 'position' and 'relation,' which are both involved in any systematic thinking of the world. These are : (1) Positions must be thought synthetically ; (2) positions must be thought analytically ; (3) relations must be thought synthetically ; (4) relations must be thought analytically. The first asserts that the whole is prior to its parts ; the second asserts that elements alone exist ; the third asserts that all elements are connected by abstract relations or that relations take precedence over positions ; the fourth asserts that all relations depend on positions. Whereas naïve personalism bases itself on (1) and (2), which are incompatible, and impersonalism on (2) and (3), which constitute an illegitimate union, critical personalism is based on the axiomatic character of (1) and (4). A deduction of categories follows. The primary categories are substantiality, causality, and individuality. The first two issue in the third, which is fundamental. The objective criterion of individuality is the unity of immanent or esoteric occurrences (*Geschehnisse*). The objective

criterion of a person is self-conservation (*Selbsterhaltung*), the subjective criterion is ego-consciousness. There is a psychophysical parallelism, but it is only phenomenological. Deeper and fundamental is 'teleo-mechanical' parallelism, of which the formula is, that what from above, *i. e.*, from the standpoint of the whole, is personal, is from below, *i. e.*, from the standpoint of the parts, material.

Main division II consists of A, Doctrine of Being (Ontology); B, Doctrine of Effectuation or *Wirken* (Teleology); C, Doctrine of Connections (Teleomechanics). In the ontological part, the person is defined as a metapsychophysical unity of the manifold having two phases, latent (*an sich*) and actual (*an und für sich*). These two phases interpenetrate. The latent person is constantly actualized and the actualized moment sinks back into the latent state of permanence, *i. e.*, of 'mechanization,' thus making room for further actualization or progress. As object, the latent person is qualitatively unique, and limited in space and time. As object, the actualizing person becomes developed qualitatively in 'organization,' temporally in history, spatially in outer form. Consciousness is present only where a person has progressive tendencies, where it strives beyond its present state towards the new. Consciousness serves the striving towards progress. The essence of the person being individuality and immanent telic activity, the Ego is identical with neither 'Ego consciousness' nor 'Soul.' Behind the conscious 'me' lies the 'I' that becomes conscious (*bewissende 'Ich'*). Dr. Stern says that, whereas the spiritualistic notion of 'Soul' is that of a bare analytical identity, the personalistic notion of 'Ego' is that of a synthetic activity. Will is the active relation of the actual (person) to its phenomena of consciousness. The 'psychic' is deeper than consciousness and in this sense pan-psychism is justifiable.

The 'teleology' forms the crux of the system. True teleology is that of universal immanent striving towards a goal. All working (*wirken*) has two phases, self-conservation and self-development (*Selbstentfaltung*). Dr. Stern's doctrine here seems to be based principally on biological considerations. Inorganic conservation (*e. g.*, in physics) is linear; organic conservation is 'radial,' *i. e.*, every act of organic conservation is directed on all sides and towards the conservation of the whole. In the species, conservation appears as heredity. Organic conservation is not mechanically explicable. Life is, in essence, a functional teleological synthesis. From this standpoint Dr. Stern develops the view that all laws are laws of conservation or reducible to such.

Self-development is the highest mark of persons. All being is in evolution. Quantitatively, evolution is a process of 'extensive integration,' a spatial growth; of 'vertical differentiation' into hierarchical systems, *e. g.*, types, organs, tissues, cells, etc.; of horizontal differentiation, with a multiplicity of individuals; of 'intensive integration' or inner unification of individual, society, etc.; and finally of 'relative cumulation,' *e. g.*, when in civilization mankind enhances its life by increasing mastery of fixed physical processes. Qualitatively, evolution is a series of metamorphoses in which the qualitatively new is ever appearing. It has 'fixed order,' *e. g.*, in mental growth; 'genetic parallelism,' *e. g.*, it holds true for human history as well as for organic evolution that the development of individual and of race are in part parallel; *rhythm* of change from slow to rapid and *vice versa*. After a careful criticism of mechanical evolution (Spencer, etc.), Darwinism, and Lamarckism, Dr. Stern advances the view that evolution, as the universal process of self-realization by individuals, is a fundamental phenomenon. He finds that Hegel and Leibniz have given the most profound interpretations of the process, but steers a middle course between Hegel's excessive monism and Leibniz's excessive pluralism. All evolution is development of persons. This involves inner tendency to the realization of capacity (*Anlage*); but the environment is a factor, hence evolution is not a simple unfolding. There is constant struggle for progress. Persons are finite in duration and the self-development of a higher person means the constant production of new persons. Only the All-Person, God, is eternal and perfect. Dr. Stern closes this part of his work with a theory of the birth of species. Species arise from one another by sudden transitions. In support of this view, he cites De Vries's theory of 'mutations.'

The final section, 'Teleomechanics,' deduces the world of things and mechanism from the world of persons. Law and measure are based on the principle of likeness or equality (*Gleichheit*). Likeness means that one thing can be substituted or serve for another. Hence the principle of likeness is a deduction from that of self-conservation. Like parts will equally serve the whole. The limit of the principle of likeness lies in the fact of the 'threshold value' of reaction. Every personal element has its own threshold of action, and every likeness relates only to one stage in the hierarchy of persons. What from a higher stage is comparable is, when regarded for itself, person in itself and incomparable or unique. Quantity-exchange or theory of substitution-value, and mathematics is the science of the universal condi-

tions of exchangeability. But there are many systems of measurement, since each kind of being has its own threshold of reaction, *e. g.*, the various types of animal organism as well as human consciousness. Teleomechanics must, in its measurements, start from the zero point for each personal level, and a universal system of measurement is gained by reducing each autonomous system to the established physical system. Dr. Stern illustrates by application to psychophysics, bioenergetics, and a suggested doctrine of culture-measurement. For this investigation in teleomechanical measurement methods, he claims only a heuristic value. It is intended as a pioneer of new scientific disciplines.

There is an interesting discussion of the reality of General Ideas, the 'Ideas' of Plato. Dr. Stern's own principle is: *Universalis in rebus, quia res in personis*. He says that, while Plato regards General Ideas as spaceless and timeless, and Hegel regards them as temporally determined, he regards them as both spatially and temporally determined. He denies the universal validity of causal law in the mechanical sense. Causal laws express only partial uniformities. Events never repeat themselves. All real causality is individual. Besides law there is everywhere *specification*, the *hic et nunc et tale*. Causal law expresses the norm of self-conservation: 'Function as universally as possible, but in the sense of conservation of the whole.' Equally valid is the norm of self-development: 'Function in a novel fashion.' The law of the conservation of energy expresses the self-conservation of the All-Person. Laws 'become' or change, since evolution is universal.

This work deserves careful consideration. It is carefully wrought out, even, I think, to the point of over-elaboration. It is a piece of systematic and able thinking, based on history and concrete experience, and confessedly most influenced by Aristotle and, after him, by Leibniz, Kant, Hegel, and Fechner. The mode of statement is systematic and as clear as could be expected in a work that contains so many novel terms. I have found the discussion of evolution the most interesting part of the work, and I also think Dr. Stern's analysis of the four fundamental dogmas worthy of examination. His 'Teleomechanics' is suggestive, although I do not think it establishes clearly the possibility of directly measuring even psychical states of individual men, much less of measuring culture-values; and I think it more conducive to clear thinking to recognize that the measurement of anything in the strict mathematical sense of the term involves its reduction to spatial and quasi-physical terms.

As to the system as a whole, there is not here space to discuss it,

but I will state what seem to me the most serious objections to which it is open. (1) The doctrine of 'psychophysical neutrality' shelves some fundamental problems, and hence involves the system in confusion and inconsistency. I agree that the relation of mind and body is not the fundamental problem of metaphysics; but, if conscious experience be not the epistemological *prius*, what becomes of end, value, and personality taken as ultimate notions? If an inferior person be a functional part of a higher person, and that inferior person be unconscious, for whom does it have intrinsic value, and how can it be an end-in-itself? It has no value nor end for itself, since it is not conscious. Surely value, end, teleological activity, and individuality are categories of conscious experience alone. (2) The deduction of consciousness is inconclusive. If atoms and molecules develop teleologically without individual consciousness, why should consciousness ever be required to further self-realization? Consciousness is an accident in Dr. Stern's system. The doctrine of neutrality is over-driven. (3) The resolution of all causality into the purely immanent type seems to me a verbal solution which really solves nothing. (4) For every person or center of final causation is a member of another person or center of final causation. Either the inferior person's telic causality is illusory or it is transeunt as well as immanent. Logically, in Dr. Stern's system, everything is really accomplished by the All-Person. (5) As a consequence of the above confusion, it is not at all clear how human values, moral, æsthetic, and religious, can be conserved or justified in a system which obliterates, in definition at least, the fundamental distinction between moral and social (or spiritual) personalities and mere organisms, molecules, and atoms. It seems a simple way of vindicating the worth of the spiritual content of personality to advance the theory that nothing is real but persons; but in truth this very theory eliminates a distinction that is fundamental to the personal life itself and eviscerates the latter of all spiritual content. There is no difference in ethical import between a naturalism which denies the reality of persons and a superficial idealism which denies the fundamental distinction between conscious selves and unconscious things. (6) Dr. Stern does violence to the historical meaning of established terms when he calls molecules and atoms 'persons.' It is likewise a confusion to speak of a family, a state, or a people, as a real personality. These are societies of persons. I think that a careful consideration of the epistemological and ontological, as well as ethical implications of the social aspect of personality, might have led to a truer view. It is very important to emphasize the

hierarchical character of the system of reality as Dr. Stern has done. It is a much more adequate analogical expression of the nature of reality to say that it is a hierarchical social system than to say that it is a vast and indescribably complex person containing all other persons within himself. Besides the objections already mentioned, the latter notion lands one in the inextricable difficulty that, while all his contents or elements evolve or progress, the All-Person does not progress ; while all his parts are temporally finite, he is eternal. Moreover, in order to develop consistently the notion that reality is a hierarchical social system, it is not necessary to obliterate the distinction between persons and things, nor to conceive imperfect individuals as mere parts contained in the 'All.'

J. A. LEIGHTON.

HOBART COLLEGE.

Idées générales de psychologie. Par G.-H. Luquet. Paris, Félix Alcan, 1906.—pp. vii, 295.

In the preface to this well-written treatise, the author states that this book is intended to present to undergraduates Bergson's psychological theory. Regarding the volume solely in the light of its aim, one must commend it without comment. The presentation is beautifully systematic and avoids all controversy. Every remark is made as an unqualified statement of fact. Whoever wishes to become familiar with Bergson's views may best do so by beginning with this work.

The main points number three : First, the development of a Berkeleyan doctrine of 'mental states,' and Malebranche's theory of the double nature of every experience, and the bearings of this hypothesis upon the problems of objectivity and subjectivity ; secondly, Bergson's theory of the complex continuity of mental life ; and lastly, as an outgrowth of this continuity, the hypothesis of modern humanism in its extreme form, practical interest being a constant and universal determinant of all experiences, including scientific and philosophical reasoning. A fourth point, almost co-important with these, is Bergson's well-known rejection of the ordinary scientific concept of causality as an implement for psychological interpretation. The explicative principle becomes that of 'immanent finality.'

The closeness with which M. Luquet has knit together these various points makes a brief criticism very unsatisfactory. The following details, however, seem to be those which are not only vital to his theory but also most widely open to challenges.

Malebranche's dictum is accepted : "It is one and the same thing